



**Kurt E. Floren**  
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**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES**

*Department of  
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**Richard K. Iizuka**  
Chief Deputy

July 24, 2012

The Honorable Board of Supervisors  
County of Los Angeles  
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
500 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Supervisors:

**HEARING ON 2011- 2012 COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
HAZARDOUS VEGETATION/WEED ABATEMENT CHARGES  
(ALL DISTRICTS) (3-VOTES)**

**SUBJECT**

In Los Angeles County, abatement of hazardous vegetation (weeds, brush and neglected landscaping) and rubbish is primarily a joint enforcement and clearance effort between the Department of Agricultural Commissioner/ Weights and Measures (ACWM) and the Consolidated Fire Protection District of Los Angeles County (District). The State law pursuant to which both programs operate requires that your Board hold a public hearing for property owners whose properties will be assessed charges for hazardous vegetation enforcement or abatement.

**IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD:**

1. Confirm the 2011-2012 ACWM hazardous vegetation abatement costs in the total amount of \$2,806,440.05 are to be assessed to owners of designated parcels of land.
2. Confirm the 2011-2012 District hazardous vegetation abatement costs in the total amount of \$11,664.00 are to be assessed to owners of improved parcels.
3. Instruct the Auditor-Controller to post the hazardous vegetation abatement costs as direct assessments against the respective parcels of land as they appear on the current property tax assessment roll.

**PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION**

Annual abatement of hazardous vegetation is a critical component of the overall fire prevention infrastructure throughout most of Los Angeles County. Your Board's confirmation of hazardous vegetation and rubbish abatement and enforcement charges enables ACWM and the District to recover costs incurred from properties upon which such costs were incurred in performing hazardous vegetation or rubbish abatement and enforcement actions, as authorized by State law.

The properties, which are both improved and unimproved (vacant), were declared by prior Board resolution to contain or have the potential to contain public nuisances due to hazardous vegetation or rubbish.

### **Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals**

This action supports the following County Strategic Plan Goals:

- Goal 1: Operational Effectiveness – Conducting nuisance abatement pursuant to the statutory authority of the California Health and Safety Code allows ACWM and the District to respond to hazards posed by weeds, brush and rubbish more quickly and effectively than when using other nuisance abatement procedures.
- Goal 2: Fiscal Responsibility – This action allows complete cost recovery for ACWM's role in this critical public safety function and allows the District to recover costs for its enforcement efforts.
- Goal 3: Integrated Services Delivery – Timely removal of hazardous weeds and brush helps to protect the life and property of many residents living in the areas covered by the ACWM/District Weed and Brush Abatement Program. Equally important, the program allows for defensible space between homes and a potential brush fire thus providing for a margin of safety for firefighters attempting to defend the homes.

### **FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING**

There is no impact on net County cost.

Approval of this action will allow ACWM to recover its expenses for abatement costs, including clerical functions such as mailings, boundary determination, data entry, etc. It will allow the District to recover costs for abatement enforcement activities beyond the annual inspection program for property owners who fail to comply with two official notices to abate hazards.

### **FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS**

Properties identified by inspection to contain weeds, brush, neglected landscaping, or rubbish in violation of the Los Angeles County Fire Code Sections 325.2.1-325.2.2, or upon which these same items were otherwise a public nuisance, were the subject of enforcement actions or direct abatement activities pursuant to the authority of the California Health and Safety Code (Code) Sections 13879 and 14875 through 14922, inclusive. The Code requires the Board to pass a resolution and hold a Public Hearing which took place on January 17, 2012 and March 27, 2012, respectively. In addition, Section 14905 of the Code requires ACWM and the District to keep an account of the cost of abatement on each separate parcel of land and render an itemized report (Report), in writing, to your Board. Attached are the itemized Reports for ACWM and the District.

Pursuant to Section 14906 of the Code, before the Report is submitted to your Board for confirmation, a copy must be posted for at least three days on or near the Board's chamber door with a notice of the time when it will be submitted to your Board for public hearing on confirmation.

Once confirmed by your Board, a copy of the Report must be submitted to the Auditor-Controller (AC) on or before August 10, 2012. The AC will enter the amounts of the respective assessments against the respective parcels of land as they appear on the current assessment roll.

**IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)**

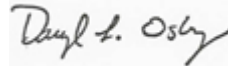
The recovery of costs incurred from enforcement or abatement of hazardous vegetation and rubbish is vital for the ongoing related operations for both ACWM and the District.

Respectfully submitted,



KURT E. FLOREN

Agricultural Commissioner, Director of Weights  
and Measures



DARYL L. OSBY

FIRE CHIEF, FORESTER & FIRE WARDEN

KEF/DLO:RBS:fm

Enclosures